

LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

What is Socialism?

by R. Palme Dutt



The Salt of the Earth

J. R. Scott defends the shop stewards



Africa in 1960

by R. Page Arnot

TORY GIMMICKS

by Jack Mitchell,
leading Convenor

AFTER TEN YEARS

David Crook returns
to a Chinese village

U.S.A. TODAY

by H. Aptheker

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JANUARY · 1960

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TO SEE BUT A DAY . . .

WHEN I got back from the Labour Party Conference at Blackpool, where I heard its leader propose to revise the aim of 'common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange', I sought the view of a wise old friend. This was it: 'No programme is worthy the acceptance of the working classes that stops short of the abolition of private property in the means of production. Any other programme is misleading and dishonest; it has two faces to it, one of which says to the working man: "This is Socialism, or the beginning of it" (which is not true), and the other says to the capitalist: "This is sham socialism; if you can get the workers or part of them to accept this, it will create a new lower middle class, a buffer, to push in between Privilege and Socialism, and save you, if only for a while".' What a pity he would have been ineligible to be a delegate; and how far ahead of the Blackpool platform was wise William Morris when he wrote the words I have quoted in the weekly *Commonweal* of December 21, 1889. That winter there was industrial ferment and, as you can read in every issue, strikes and demonstrations amongst gas-stokers and dockers, bakers, textile, boot and shoe workers, railwaymen and iron-workers. Whilst unions were becoming militant their leaders were nearly all wedded to the Liberal Party; and the pioneers of socialism were separated into three divergent groups, few in numbers, and within each keen contests of opinion. In the Socialist League William Morris himself had just been forced out of the editorship of *Commonweal*. But he still found ways to fight for clarity on basic principles; and as I

turned over the pages of the first issue for 1890, seventy years ago this month, there was the announcement for the next week of a 'New Serial story by William Morris entitled *News from Nowhere*, being some chapters from a Utopian Romance'. The first instalment of this world famous book, as yet unequalled as a picture of the relations between people in Communist society, reflects the day to day preoccupations of the active political worker and the controversies of the time. We start bang away, down to earth, with Morris on the underground railway, 'discontentedly stewing' in that 'vapour bath of hurried and discontented humanity', going home from the Socialist League Hall, where there had been 'a brisk conversational discussion as to what would happen on the morrow of the revolution', and what the 'fully developed new society' would be like. I turned over to the page of *Commonweal* carrying reports of demonstrations, branch and street meetings. There is 'Wm. Morris' lecturing at a North Kensington Coffee Tavern 'to a good audience; afterward the lecture created an animated discussion: 13 *Weals* sold and 1s. 5½d. collected'. It shows that each Tuesday that winter Morris was travelling home to Hammersmith from weekly meetings of the Propaganda Committee which was discussing 'The Best Method of Propaganda', and 'Does Socialism Imply a Standard of Morality?' and 'Brotherhood'. And so in the first chapter of his story he describes, with a wry grin, the 'six persons present and consequently six sections of the party were represented, four of which had strong but divergent Anarchist views'. He describes himself journeying home disgusted with himself for having lost his temper, which he was 'well used to', and muttering: 'If I could but see a day of it, if I could but see it!'

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Notes of the Month

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

'We have to show that we are a modern mid-twentieth century party.'

Rt. Hon. Hugh Gaitskell at the Blackpool Labour Party Conference, November 28, 1959.

WE are entering the second half of what an indignant critic has termed 'the so-called twentieth century' and what the most venerable survivor of the dying social order has termed 'the terrible twentieth century'. Never before has the course of human

history been so plainly charted in advance or become so clearly visible ahead. 'Mid-twentieth century' has of late been adopted as a fashionable code word of the oddly termed 'New Thinkers'. Mr. Gaitskell assured his startled Blackpool hearers that, if he wished to delete the aim of common ownership from the Labour Party programme and substitute a ragbag of nineteenth century liberal ethical platitudes as a more 'adequate' basis, this was only to bring the Labour Party up-to-date as 'a modern mid-twentieth century party'. Could irony go further? Even Euclid with all the subtle aid of Mr. Bevan could hardly straddle this spanning of the centuries.

The twentieth century has proved and is further proving in practical experience to be the era of the transition to communism. The first half of the twentieth century has seen the victory of communism over

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one-third of the earth. There is sufficient ground for certainty that, whatever the intervening struggles (and the strength of socialism now achieved, and of the extending ideas of socialism among all peoples, has brought within view the possibility of diminishing these birth-pangs), the second half of the twentieth century will see the fulfilment of communism triumphant over the entire globe and reaching for the stars.

Marxism Vindicated

Marxism already at the opening of the twentieth century, and Marxism alone, had correctly foretold its character. Marxism already in the years before the opening of the twentieth century had foretold in some detail the character and course of the approaching first world war and its outcome in the Russian Revolution. Marxism had foretold the future role of the Russian revolution as the vanguard of the world revolution. Marxism had foretold the union of the working class struggle for socialism in the advanced industrial countries with the national liberation struggle of the subject peoples as the key to the victory of the world revolution. Marxism had explicitly warned against narrowing the perspective of socialism to Western Europe in place of recognising the world expansion of capitalism, which had rendered such a perspective out of date, and the consequent world character of the struggle and revolutionary transformation in prospect.

Living Marxism versus Revisionism

Thus the experience of the first half of the twentieth century has abundantly proved in practice the truth of Marxism as the science of historical development and of the advance to communism, and the guide to the victory of the socialist revolution. But surely, the indignant questioner will ask, the twentieth century has brought new conditions which Marx and Engels in the nineteenth century could not have foreseen? Certainly. Lenin carried forward Marxism into the era of imperialism and of the beginning of the world socialist revolution, just as the international communist movement charts new paths today in the ever expanding advance. But Lenin carried forward Marxism by restoring in the first place its true teachings in the new conditions, against those who sought to abandon it in the name of 'Revision' to meet the new conditions, and against the gross philistine distortions of Marxism by the majority of the leaders of the old Second International, who in practice

capitulated to the revisionists and fell into all the traps against which Marx and Engels had warned.

Old and New Revisionism

Revisionism flourished in the first decade of the twentieth century. The present attempted revival half a century behind the times by the antediluvian 'New Thinkers' is no more than a weak and watery echo of the original article. Revisionism is the philosophy of surrender to capitalism in the name of realist facing of modern conditions. Revisionism bows low before the apparent might and success of modern monopoly capitalism and hastens to jettison socialism as obsolete. During the first decade of the twentieth century this was by comparison comprehensible. This was the era of the booming 'prosperity' and seemingly limitless expansion of the 'golden' Edwardian years; of the seemingly invincible might of the European imperialist Great Powers ruling and dividing the world, and crushing every revolt, so that the very conception of revolution was declared 'out of date' in the face of modern armaments; of the flowing tide of liberal social reform and Lloyd George's inauguration of the Welfare State, in imitation of Bismarck, to cut the ground from under the feet of socialism. Socialism had won no victory yet. No wonder the shallow and the servile began to proclaim that this was a 'new capitalism' which belied all the hoary dogmas of Marx based on mid-nineteenth century capitalism. The Old Revisionism went down in mud and blood in the first world war.

Belated Revival

But today? Today, after the victory of the socialist revolution over one-third of the earth, after the visible discordant antagonisms and confusions of the shrinking imperialist sector, after the demonstration of the superiority of socialism in the rate of advance in every sphere of productivity and raising social standards to overtake and leave behind during the next few years the highest levels of the most privileged and advanced centres of capitalism—at this moment to attempt to resurrect the hymn to the 'miracle' of the 'new capitalism' or 'contemporary capitalism' as supposedly disproving the hoary dogmas of Marx is really a comic relapse into second childhood on the part of those who fear 'the challenge of communism'. The New Revisionism is indeed a puny child. But since this puny child is at the moment giving trouble in the for the

time being politically backward corner of the world represented by Britain, it is necessary to resume the battle of half a century ago for Socialism against Revisionism. This is the lesson of the Blackpool Conference.

Storm in a Teacup?

Marx once said, long ago, writing from Cologne on December 31, 1848, that 'a revolution of the economic conditions of any country of the European Continent or even of the whole Continent is but a storm in a glass of water unless England actively participates in it'. And again in the same article: 'any social revolutionary upheaval in Europe must necessarily miscarry, unless the English bourgeoisie or the industrial and commercial supremacy of Great Britain is shaken. . . . And old England will only be overthrown in a world war'. Those days are long since past, precisely because the truth underlying this penetrating prediction, which equally understood the limitations of 1848 in Europe and the conditions of future revolutionary advance, has been demonstrated by the outcome. The industrial, commercial and financial supremacy of Britain was finally ended in the first world war. Therewith the ultimate counter-revolutionary power of the English upper class, which defeated the French Revolution and Napoleon, joined the Holy Alliance and strangled 1848, was broken for ever. In vain Churchill, true heir to the tradition, sought to strangle 1917. The world socialist revolution swept forward, and has continued to sweep forward, in spite of the rulers of Britain.

Ironic Reversal

Britain has fallen behind the United States and Western Germany in the capitalist sphere, behind the Soviet Union and the advance of socialism on a world scale, soon also to be overtaken by China. In this situation, in face of the scale of the world transformation now taking place, in face of the magnitude of the world issues now coming up for decision and typified in the new relations of the United States and the Soviet Union and possibilities of peaceful co-existence, the internal policy crisis in the Labour Party over the programme of domestic economic reconstruction might appear a minor flurry, little more than another spasm in the gradual disintegration of Social Democracy out-dated by events. The irony of history might be claimed to have reversed a century later Marx's 'storm in a glass of water'. The storm in a teacup is now in Britain,

while Socialism sweeps forward in the world. However, there is more in it than that.

Imperialism and Socialism

Britain was the classic country of capitalism. Britain was the classic country of the birth of the working class movement. Though both priorities have long since given place to being overtaken by later comers, the significance of what happens in Britain has not disappeared. Britain is still the centre of the largest world empire, even though diminished. The loss of political rule over wide territories has not yet meant the parallel ending of the operations of the octopus of British finance-capital drawing rich tribute also from the peoples of territories now politically independent, but still with colonial economies. The struggle for economic liberation is still only beginning. The ferocity of the resistance over the Suez Canal Company nationalisation or Iran oil nationalisation has shown how intense this battle will be, once it is fully launched. It is this battle which will finally undermine the old imperialist basis of Britain's economy, and thereby compel, if not already undertaken, the advance to socialism in Britain. Understanding of this is the key to the economics and politics of modern Britain.

Illusions of the End of Empire

Illusions about the liquidation of imperialism are the main factor which has falsified the current discussion, on both sides, about socialism in the Labour Party, as if it were a utopian discussion about the ideal form of domestic economic organisation in a country like Sweden or Switzerland, or rather (since even these have their specific, though more limited, role in the imperialist complex) Ruritania. Similar illusions appear, to judge from reviews, to be the theme of the latest book of the Labour Party theorist and veteran hero of the war against the Malayan Liberation Army, Strachey, recently published under the title *End of Empire*. In this book he has apparently followed up his previous volume entitled *Contemporary Capitalism*, which echoed the current illusions about the supposed new transformed capitalism as the refutation of a caricature of Marx's theories of the laws of capitalist development (exposed in these Notes on *Economics and Politics of Increasing Misery* in December, 1957), with a similar reflection of the current fashionable illusions about the end of empire as a supposed refutation of Lenin. Judgment can only be provisional, since author and publisher, preferring discretion to valour, have abstained from serving

a review copy to *Labour Monthly* or the *Daily Worker*, evidently in panic fear that a Marxist critique might prick the gossamer bubble of illusion.

Hamlet Without the Prince

The facts of modern Britain are not so easily exorcised. The vast pleasure park of the wealthy extending over so much of Southern England and the Home Counties is the visible symbol of the parasitic rentier economy of the coupon-clippers of the giant overseas monopolies, whose luxury is sustained, not only from the exploitation of the British workers, but from the plunder of hundreds of millions of colonial and semi-colonial slaves. To discuss socialism in Britain without facing this central fact of Britain's present economy (or even with the added insolence of sanctimonious sermons parading the poverty of the colonial or 'under-developed' peoples as an object for patronising charity, or even as an excuse for cutting the standards of British workers) is to live in Cloud-cuckooland.

Taming the Tiger

It is precisely this role of Britain as the historic first centre of world imperialism and imperialist economy, now weakened, now faced with chronically renewed economic difficulties, but still struggling to maintain itself, that makes every political development within Britain of wide international significance. For it was from the superior resources of the world industrial monopoly in the nineteenth century, and of the advanced imperialist economy in the twentieth century, that the British ruling class has been able, and still continues to be able, to lead the way in the arts of circumventing the class struggle; to control, tame, influence or limit the development of the working class movement within permitted channels, by winning the practical acquiescence in the system from considerable sections of better paid workers and according rich prizes for collaboration to many of the leadership.

'We Are All Middle Class'

Britain was the first country, as Marx said, to develop, not only a bourgeoisie and a bourgeois aristocracy but also a trend towards a 'bourgeois working class' among a section of the workers (please note that this was said a century before Macmillan's brilliant discovery of the supposedly 'classless' Britain). Lenin repeatedly

noted that in Britain 'the number of factory and office workers who live a petty-bourgeois life is exceptionally high owing to the practical enslavement of hundreds of millions of people inhabiting the colonies', and that many of these better paid workers, restricting themselves to 'improving their sometimes tolerable petty-bourgeois position', lose sight of their class mission and become 'captives of bourgeois and imperialist prejudices'. In short, the 'never had it so good' slogan is no startling innovation of 1959, but was long used in corresponding forms for appropriate sections in the Victorian era. This was the social basis of Disraeli's discovery of 'Tory Democracy' in the nineteenth century, or Macmillan's 'Middle Way' theories and 'Butskellism' in our day.

Retarded Development

The understanding of this peculiar set-up in Britain was always the central feature of the political analysis of Marx and Lenin in dealing with the political situation in Britain and the reasons for the slower development of the political labour movement and of socialism in modern Britain since the vanished and long forgotten days of Chartism.

All the best revolutionary elements in the working class who are dissatisfied with the slow progress of development which in England, perhaps, will be slower than in other countries, will come over to us. Development is slow because the British bourgeoisie is in a position to create better conditions for the aristocracy of labour and by that to retard the progress of the revolution.

(Lenin, Speech on the Labour Party at the Second Congress of the Communist International, 6th August, 1920).

The modern political labour movement in Britain (following the formation and tireless pioneering work of the tiny socialist groups) only emerged in a very rudimentary form long after mass Social Democratic Parties had been organised and matured on the Continent. Similarly today Communism is still at an early minority stage in Britain long after the main mass Social Democratic Parties had become mass Communist Parties on the Continent.

Citadel of Conservatism

For three-quarters of a century since the general democratic extension of the suffrage Conservative Governments have been returned in Britain for two-thirds of the time by the votes of a population with a working class majority. Only twice has Conserv-

been decisively beaten at the polls, once in 1906 in the inter-

upsurge following the Russian Revolution of 1905, and again in 1945, following the alliance with the Soviet Union and the joint victory with the Soviet armies over fascism. The Liberal Imperialist caucus in the Cabinet and secret preparation of the first world war wrecked the Liberal-Radical-Labour mass victory of 1906. Similarly the Attlee-Bevin policy of co-operation with imperialism, lining up with the cold war of monopoly capitalism, led by the United States, against socialism, wrecked the constructive side of the work of the first Labour Government and soon dissipated the majority of 1945. The same surrender to Tory imperialism has ensured increasing Tory majorities for three elections.

Cracks in the Citadel

Today a new moment has come. The series of continuous and extending electoral reverses over the past decade and a half since the ending of the war has created what Mr. Bevan has not incorrectly termed 'a crisis' (*Tribune*, December 11, 1959) in the policy and leadership of the Labour Party. Already in 1955 *The Times* editorial, 'In Decline?', found that

the shocking fact about the election was the steep fall in the Labour vote for the first time in a quarter of a century.

(*The Times*, June 4, 1955.)

The editorial concluded that

the next year or so will either see the turning point or a more rapid and disastrous decline which would leave the British political scene in a state of difficult and dangerous transition.

But 1959 has seen a further decline. Thus the British ruling class was already in 1955, and is still more today, in open alarm about the situation and prospects of the Labour Party. They express alarm lest the Labour Party might be beginning to lose its hold on the workers. Why? For love of the Labour Party or a political labour movement? Hardly. They do not conceal their fear that a continuance of the 'shocking' and 'disastrous' decline in support for the Labour Party might open the way to a 'difficult and dangerous' political situation in Britain.

Ruling Class Hopes in Mr. Gaitskell

The openly expressed alarm of ruling class circles, consequent on the series of Tory electoral victories, is lest the Labour Party might prove unable to continue to fulfil its role as the indispensable safety valve partner of Conservatism, the 'In and Out' loyal opposition of the two-Party system. Not because it is too revolutionary

to fit into these requirements. On the contrary. Because its very bipartisanship and failure to present an alternative programme, and the consequent contradiction between its class structure and practical politics, might so erode the basis of its support as to render it incapable of maintaining the swing of the pendulum which is essential to the stability of the British political system. Hence the universal concern of the entire capitalist press with the problem and crisis of the Labour Party. Hence the enthusiastic support for Mr. Gaitskell's 'brave stand' (*Economist*) or 'courageous endeavour' (*Sunday Times*) to solve the dilemma by jettisoning the inherited remnants of class conceptions or socialistic objectives and returning to the safe and tried nineteenth century formula of the 'classless' liberal-conservative alternation. Not of course the Liberal Party of Mr. Grimond. But the revival of the Victorian liberal-capitalist content under the continuing label of a 'Labour Party' which has lost even its original meaning as a name, and which publicly denies its class basis, while greedily striving to keep the trade unions within its disciplinary grip in order to prevent the emergence of working class politics in the broad movement. Such is the vision of paradise presented to the anxious British capitalists by Mr. Gaitskell.

Raising the Socialist Banner in Reverse

But Mr. Gaitskell's would-be 'solution', so far from solving the crisis, intensifies it. For the net effect of his offensive has been to bring the question of socialism and the socialist objective into the centre of controversy more sharply than it has ever been raised before in British politics. Mr. Gaitskell could have, if he had chosen, quietly left in possession for automatic endorsement the existing policy, which has already long ago repudiated socialism in practice and offers instead the so-called 'mixed economy' (modern monopoly capitalism integrated with the state) and all the ideas of Mr. Gaitskell and his friends. He could have left undisturbed the dust to continue gathering on the icon relic Clause 4 ('common ownership of the means of production') as a museum piece for occasional genuflections by the faithful on Sundays. Nothing would have been easier than to let the sleeping dog continue his slumbers and conduct one of the usual exercises in 'interpretation' of the holy text. Thus, for example, not merely the Shareholding State, but equally a Tory 'Property-Owning Democracy', with stock holdings spread throughout the community, could clearly be argued to be a form of 'common ownership of the means of production'. Instead, Mr. Gaitskell chose to open a direct offensive against

Ark of the Covenant. Thereby he ensured the maximum opposition even from sections which had placidly accepted without a murmur the practical repudiation of socialism in *Industry and Society*. Mr. Bevan had to intervene to rescue Mr. Gaitskell from the anger of a significant proportion of his audience. By raising the Banner of Anti-Socialism, Mr. Gaitskell had compelled the Banner of Socialism to become the centre of battle in the Labour Party. With what aim in view?

Mr. Gaitskell's Tactics

It would be a grave error to underestimate Mr. Gaitskell's tactical judgment and aim in this offensive. His all-wise mentors and tutors in the more influential organs of the conservative press, while commending his courage, have accused him of making a tactical blunder in concentrating his offensive on a front at once the most difficult and the least practically important (since no one bothers about the constitution anyway), in place of choosing more easily attainable and practically useful aims, such as a few trifling organisational changes to bring the Labour Party up-to-date in line with the practice of the Conservative Party, diminish the role of the Annual Conference and the trade unions and increase the effective powers of the parliamentary leadership. But Mr. Gaitskell knew the conditions of his problem better than his mentors. There is every reason to believe that the brutality of his offensive was deliberate, and that there is the fullest intention on his part (with the threat of resignation if his demand to delete the existing clause about common ownership in the party constitution is not accepted), and of the dominant leadership, to force through this change, whatever the protests of the more articulate socialist sections in the Labour Party.

New Programmes of Social Democracy

No one can fail to understand the significance of this offensive to expunge the socialist aim, not merely from practical policy (this has long ago been done), but from the formal constitution of the Labour Party. For this is the same process which has been happening in the current period in all the Social Democratic Parties, as in the new basic programmes of the Austrian, German, Belgian and other Social Democratic Parties. It might seem extraordinary that this process of the open, ostentatious, publicly proclaimed retreat from socialism should take place at the very moment of the greatest advance and triumphs of socialism over the world. But in fact these

are two sides of a single historical development. The new programmes are presented as the answer to what the leaders call 'the challenge of Communism'. The new programmes are presented as the solution to the deepening crisis and visible failure of Social Democracy in Western Europe since the war, demonstrated in the successive electoral reverses of the Labour Party or the capitulation of the French Socialist Party to De Gaulle.

Bolting the Door Against Socialism

Mr. Gaitskell understood very well that if the Blackpool Conference, which had been originally called to perform an inquest on electoral defeat, had registered a verdict on the policies and leadership which had led to continuously extending electoral reverses ever since the war, that verdict could only have been a condemnation of the policies and leadership which had led to such a disastrous outcome. But these were precisely the policies of the repudiation of socialism and glorification of the 'new' 'reformed' capitalism in the name of 'new thinking', with which he himself had been most closely associated, which he and his friends had forced on the party and justified as indispensable for electoral success, and which had been proved by experience to be electorally damning. Hence a verdict in accordance with the evidence could only have been a call for a reversal of these policies, and for a radical turn to the type of popular aggressive policies, with at any rate the public proclamation of socialist aims, which had been proved so successful in winning majority mass support and in obtaining the only absolute parliamentary majority ever won by Labour. In other words, for a turn to the left, for militant policies against the monopolists and imperialism, for independent working class politics, for peace and socialism. To forestall this menace Mr. Gaitskell has set himself the aim to bar the road in advance by permanently banning the aim of socialism (save as a meaningless term of philanthropic aspiration) from the programme and constitution of the Labour Party—that is, to make socialism, in the concrete sense of social ownership of the means of production, in effect one more proscribed issue (suspected of communist associations, 'monolithic', 'totalitarian') incompatible with membership and support of the programme of the Labour Party.

Clause 4

This direct offensive against socialism now launched by the dominant Labour Party leadership opens a serious battle. B

also opens a splendid opportunity for all fighters for socialism, provided there is unity, political clarity and full mobilisation in the battle. For the first time in the half century of history of the Labour Party the question of socialism, not as a rhetorical aspiration, but as a defined aim of the 'common ownership of the means of production' in order 'to secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry', has become a central issue of controversy throughout the Labour Party from top to bottom. When the famous Clause 4, against which the offensive has now been opened by the dominant leadership, was originally introduced forty-one years ago in 1918, there was no such battle. The original clause was not carried by the left against the opposition of the right. The original clause was devised and inserted by the right wing leadership of that time in face of the revolutionary ferment following the victory of the Russian Socialist revolution in 1917. The new constitution of 1918, with its proclamation of a socialist aim, was devised by the right wing leadership to counter the demand for a socialist revolution with the promise of a future peaceful constitutional advance to socialism—which was then universally seen, by both sides, without dispute, as the social ownership of the means of production replacing class ownership and profit-making capitalism.

Undisputed Aim

Even up to the second world war, that is, so long as a parliamentary majority had not been achieved to bring professions to the test, this aim was still universally proclaimed also by the right wing leadership. As late as 1937, Mr. Attlee in his *Labour Party in Perspective* was still declaring:

All the major industries will be owned and controlled by the community.

Similarly Mr. Morrison had declared in 1934:

The important essentials of socialism are that all the great industries and the land should be publicly and collectively owned.

The old standard Labour Party textbook, Fred Henderson's *The Case for Socialism*, originally published in 1911, with a revised edition in 1924, declared:

This is Socialism: Community ownership of the land and of the means of producing and distributing wealth.

There was no dispute at that time between right and left about this aim. The dispute was about the method of achieving it. Social Democracy declared that it could peacefully and constitutionally

achieve this aim by a parliamentary majority. Communists warned that the Social Democratic practice of repudiation of the class struggle and close daily collaboration with capitalism would render impossible of achievement this professed aim, of wresting the means of production from the capitalists, since this aim could only be achieved by the strength of a united working class and its allies in relentless class struggle against the monopolists. Communists were accordingly accused by the Social Democrats—falsely, against the evidence—of advocating violent revolution in preference to peaceful parliamentary methods.

Lessons of Experience

Today all this has changed. The experience of the Third Labour Government, with an absolute parliamentary majority, proved the incapacity of Social Democracy, even with an absolute parliamentary majority, to carry through the change to socialism. The Attlee-Bevin Labour Government could carry through important social reforms, such as the health service. It carried through measures of nationalisation which were salvage operations for capitalism in distress, either in neglected industries (coal and rails) which were becoming unprofitable, and where only state action could undertake the necessary costly modernisation and simultaneously force the extraction of surplus from the workers for the old owners and the new lenders of capital (thus guaranteeing fictitious 'deficits' of nationalisation and rendering the operation of this type of nationalisation highly unpopular with the public and with the workers concerned), or in auxiliary industries, such as electricity, where unified operation was essential for the service of the main spheres of private profit-making capitalism. But it could make no change whatever in class relations, that is, in the class ownership of wealth and the means of production, and the extraction of surplus from the workers for the private owners. It left the capitalist monopolies more strongly entrenched than ever, as subsequent Labour Party pamphlets have admitted. And its devoted bipartisan fulfilment of the imperialist politics of the cold war and rearmament, with the consequent burdens on the working class, weakened its basis of working class support and prepared the way for the long run of Toryism in the fifties.

New Controversy

It is from this experience of the failure of West European Social Democracy since the war that the new controversies have a

In the light of this experience the Labour Party and modern Social Democracy in Western Europe could only choose one of two courses. Either to recognise the justice of the criticism of former policies, and move over to a new socialist programme, that is, to unity of the working class against the monopolies, in order to carry through the necessary socialist transformation by taking over all the decisive means of production out of the hands of the monopolists. Or to abandon the aim of socialism. Either to maintain the aim and change the method. Or to maintain the method and abandon the aim. The Labour Party dominant leadership and modern Social Democracy have chosen the second path—the public retreat from the aim of socialism. Hence Mr. Gaitskell's new offensive, which is the exact counterpart of the new basic programme of German Social Democracy.* It is now the Communist Parties which are the advocates of the peaceful and constitutional path of transition to socialism by the support of the majority of the people expressed through a parliamentary majority (the Communist Party's *British Road to Socialism* since 1951). The peaceful transition to socialism, which was once regarded as the hallmark of Social Democracy against Communism, has now become the hallmark of modern Communism, while modern Social Democracy, denouncing social ownership as 'totalitarian', has moved over to open liberal capitalism. The whirligig of time brings odd revenges.

Well Worked, Old Mole

So the impossible has become possible. The dialectic of development is bringing a new political landscape in spite of all. Under the impact of the extending triumphs of socialism in the world, and under the impact of the simultaneously extending electoral reverses and consequent inner crisis of the Labour Party, the question of socialism has for the first time become the centre and forefront of burning controversy in the Labour Party from top to bottom, and, through the reflection of this, also in the front pages of the millionaire popular press, even in the conservative climate of Britain, even through the agency of such a champion of capitalist stability as Mr. Gaitskell. The old mole works well.

*The new basic programme of German Social Democracy, adopted by the Executive in September, 1958, as of the Austrian Socialist Party, adopted in May, 1958, substitutes the ethical-humanist definition of socialism ('free development of the human personality', etc.) for the old conception of social ownership of the means of production (now condemned in modern social democratic language as a 'totalitarian' conception), and emphasises the importance of 'free enterprise' and 'free initiative for employers' as 'basic foundations'. The text, remarks the *Liberal Manchester Guardian* (November 13, 1959) 'reads very like the Conservative Party Manifesto'.

Twofold Offensive

The battle is now on. It is a twofold offensive that is being launched against the working class and socialism, alike in the industrial and in the political field. The Tory Government and all the forces of capitalism, assisted by certain elements in the Trades Union Congress General Council and the Labour Party Executive, are simultaneously conducting an offensive against any trade union that shows militancy, against strikes, against shop stewards and against socialism. This twofold offensive calls for the united resistance of the industrial and political movement. The political fight for socialism cannot be separated from the current industrial struggle in which millions of workers are at this moment ranged against the monopolist owners of industry on behalf of their demands on wages and hours. Equally the political role of the trade unions needs to carry the decisive weight in the Labour Party in defence of their traditional aims to win the wealth they produce into the hands of the workers and defeat the offensive on behalf of rent, interest and profits now being conducted in the Labour Party.

Battle for Socialism

This battle for socialist consciousness in the labour movement will require a big work of political clarification. The weakness of the debate in the Blackpool Conference was that the issue of socialism was presented in the main speeches on both sides in an abstract form, divorced from the real class confrontation and class issues, and disguised in a formal discussion about more or less nationalisation as a technical form of organisation under the state, to be contrasted with the advantages or disadvantages of other forms of organisation. To judge from the published reports, nothing appears to have been said about such sordid matters as rent, interest and profits, or exploitation. Thus the heart of socialism disappeared from view. On this basis the attempt may no doubt be made to evolve on behalf of the Labour Party Executive some new 'compromise formula' which shall replace the plain aim of the 'common ownership of the means of production' (the indispensable foundation for all social and economic emancipation) with a medley of high-sounding phrases and ethical aspirations and economic good intentions capable of acceptance by any Liberal or Tory and equally capable of interpretation by anyone in any direction. But the realities of class society and the necessity of socialism in the modern world will not be so easily banished. The present situati

calls for the united co-operation of all who stand for socialism, whether they are communists, socialists in the Labour Party, trade unionists or co-operators, to combine their efforts to defeat the anti-socialist offensive and win the battle for socialism within the labour movement as the indispensable condition to be able to win the battle for socialism in Britain.

December 14, 1959.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

INDIA IN FACT

The appalling pictures of human life under Imperialism are well brought out. Be it landless peasants with 2d. per day living standard, or the oppressed industrial worker with 10d. a day on which to live in expensive cities—both have to starve, succumb to death-rates of 250 to 320 per thousand, see their infants die at the heavy rates of over 500 per thousand in certain areas, both have to submit to 5 million preventible deaths of poverty year by year, and have life shortened to an average span of 23 years. Such is the true picture of British Imperialism in India instead of the British boon of civilisation and progress which even now some British Labour members acclaim in Parliament to show off their class impartiality.

(Shapurji Saklatvala reviewing *British Imperialism in India* by Joan Beauchamp. January, 1935.)

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THE SALT OF THE EARTH

J. R. Scott*

To examine and sign at least once a quarter the contribution cards of all members, to use every endeavour to see that all men starting are duly qualified trade unionists, and that all persons are receiving the approved rates and complying with the practice of the shop and district etc.

THIS is the opening paragraph defining the powers and duties of shop stewards taken from Rule 13, Clause 21 Amalgamated Engineering Union Rules. That rule and clause also authorises shop stewards to 'interview foremen or other persons representing management *on any question* arising in the shop or department' (my emphasis). Other unions in industry have very similar rules and regulations covering duties of shop stewards.

In view of the bleatings and shriekings of the ruling class, the capitalist press, members of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and other notorieties, it is well that we should see the shop steward in a correct perspective. In a very dissimilar position to those who constantly abuse him, the shop steward is not self appointed and he certainly has not his position for a lifetime. Far from it.

He is elected by his fellows in the factory annually in the main, and subject to being removed at any time by those who elect him. He has constantly to be on the alert against the employer who will, if opportunity presents itself, remove him from his factory. In his position as elected representative he carries out the wishes of those who elect him and at the same time gives leadership to them in accordance with the policy, aims and objects of his union, interpreted in a practical and realistic way as far as his shop or factory is concerned. It is bad enough when the employers and the press attack him; but how dare certain trade union leaders—many of whom have never been a shop steward—and some indeed who have never worked in a factory, or for that matter, never worked for an employer do the same thing only more so. Shop stewards are the 'salt of the earth': and without them no trade union, I repeat, no trade union which intends to give effect to its rules and constitution can function effectively.

*Mr. J. R. Scott up to 1957 had completed fifteen years as one of the seven members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union Executive Council; and was also a member of the Confederation Executive Council since the A.E.U. was affiliated.—Ed., L.M.

He who carries out the daily work of protecting wages and working conditions, battling for piece-work prices, educating the workers, supporting national campaigns, dealing with dozens of mundane matters, while active in the union and the wider working class movement deserves and is entitled to the full support and unquestionable loyalty from those at top level who claim to be the national leaders. Take one classic example. If workers are forced to take action to preserve or establish 100 per cent trade unionism, the witch hunters are in full cry with 'unofficial, unconstitutional, freedom of the individual, get back to work, wild cat strike' and so on. Yet the rules of the union, rules which some national leaders so smugly claim to give full effect to, it is these very rules which authorises and makes it an obligation on the shop steward to use '*every endeavour*' to see that all men are trade unionists.

Unfortunately there is a difference between top and bottom leadership in the unions. Take for example wages and hours. The National Committee of the A.E.U. and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions decided for a national campaign on both these issues. Everybody is waiting with bated breath for that to be launched. When shop stewards call a conference so as to discuss ways and means of giving effect to a campaign, do the national leaders step in with their support? Not on your life! Instead some of them rush in to ban the conference with threat of 'disruptions', 'unofficial' (whatever that means) and goodness knows what. The applause? Plenty from the ruling class and the capitalist press.

I well remember one occasion when a number of full-time officials were sitting together at York. One of them who shall be nameless, but nevertheless has had more than a fair amount of national press publicity, was complaining to the assembled company about the lads 'down below' (as he put it) kicking up a row about this, that and the other, when the late Gavin Martin, then the General Secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, interrupted him in his broad, firm Scottish dialect with the words: 'an' if you hadna kicked up some sort of a row when you were doon below, naebody would have heard of your name either'. This caused the subject to be changed rather hurriedly. How true that remark was. Numbers of national leaders found their way to the top or middle level for airing what they considered grievances and injustices: serving their time so to speak, through shop, branch and district level. I am not so sure whether this remains so today: for leaders in my knowledge lack that experience: and it seems that

the more they lack that experience the more the ruling class and their press praise them as sage, wise counsellors. In fact I cannot recall when the movement was so poorly and inefficiently manned at the top. On the other hand there is an ever wider bank of thoughtful, capable, experienced fighting men and women at the other end. This is a glaring contradiction, but it is a fact. *I know.*

The engineering workers did not fail when the Executive of the Confederation called for action in the twenty-four-hour stoppage and the full stoppage of work in 1957. This generation in the factories never had 'cold feet'—it was the 'great men', 'the sages', the 'wise counsellors' who ran out.

Never has such a low level been reached in doing the dirty work of the capitalist class. This right wing in the Labour Movement must be at the bottom of the pitch. Yet we have an organised working class as good as ever in the past. Men and women in the factories and workshops are just not having reaction imposed upon them. In dozens of factories where the employers are trying the old trick of unemployment under the name of redundancy, workers will not have it. Where national officials have failed to obtain wages to keep up with increasing prices, organised workers in the factories have negotiated increased wages and in some cases reduced hours. In fact militant action in the factories is taking a new lease of life; it has never been dead; spirits are high, determination more dogged, and the desire and intention to go forward is developing. This is bound to take the turn towards more direct struggles, against the employers in the factories. Labour leaders can talk nonsense about 'classless society' but men and women toiling at the point of production know and have learned that the class war is being waged against them day in and day out. For here is the class struggle in practice and fact. More and more men and women have recognised that unless they mass their forces together and wage battle with the employers on a class basis, then defeat will be their doom. That is why in factories such as Fords, British Motor Corporation, Electricity Supply and many others, trade unionists of all unions band themselves together under the banner of Joint Shop Stewards Committees to wage defensive and, what is more important, offensive battle against the employers. It is these mass movements in the factories that have prevented wholesale discharges in and around the Midlands, Lancashire and elsewhere and have fought attempted wage cuts advanced under the guise of new methods of production.

These great developing class movements are dubbed 'unofficial'. But the organised working class are not unused to epithets. 'Reds', 'Bolsheviks', 'unpatriotic', 'against the country', 'agitators', 'selfish', are but a few of them, culled by the ruling class at different times and in differing situations. But all such abuse and threats of suspensions and expulsion from the unions cannot dispose of the class struggle. It's here, there and everywhere, where capitalist society exists.

Ask any active worker in the engineering industry if he has any faith and belief in the 'Procedure for the Avoidance of Disputes'. The overwhelming majority will reply by saying 'if you can't resolve a dispute in the factory then you certainly will not through Procedure'. And with this basic knowledge and understanding, shop stewards resolve hundreds of disputes or likely disputes every day. Their authority is to raise *'any question arising in the shop or department'*. How horrible, how futile to tell these workers that they are acting unofficially when their knowledge, experience and faith has taught them the lesson.

The shop stewards movement was born in the moment of need during the first world war when the leaders had not only given up the struggle, but had gone over to the other side. Shop stewards came into being to defend and protect those things that had been won from the employers. They also came into being to save the unions for its members. And how well they fulfilled those self-imposed tasks. Hurling abuse, cries of 'unofficial', etc., cannot destroy the life blood of the unions. Through this life blood flows the spirit of the class struggle, the struggle to obtain gains and ultimate victory for the working class. Hence it is that the ruling class and their lackeys in the labour movement are in full cry to clamp down on the shop stewards, restrict their activity and ultimately destroy them. This will never happen for there are too many shop stewards who believe in the objects of their unions, as for example Clause 2, Rule I of the A.E.U. which sets out as its main object 'the control of industry in the interests of the community'. And these shop stewards are prepared to go on and on until this has been achieved. As the shop stewards of 1917 so magnificently fulfilled the task of saving the unions, so their counterparts in 1960 may well have to shoulder that task again. In the spirit of self-sacrifice, determination and love of their fellows, they will do it well. Shop stewards are an integral part of the A.E.U. Rule 13, Clause 22 states 'shop stewards shall be directly represented on the District Committee on the basis of one shop steward for every

5,000 members or part thereof'. Shop stewards can be (and indeed are) elected to serve on the national policy-making body of the union—from the factory floor to the leading organisation of the union.

How dare these tin-pot emperors in the General Council of the T.U.C. conduct an enquiry into the activities of shop stewards. Would it be unfair to ask how many of them have ever been shop stewards? Would it be unkind to say that if they must inquire into alleged malpractices they should have a look at the speech I made when sponsoring an official trade union resolution at the T.U.C. six years ago:

On the surface the present Rules provide a democratic procedure by preventing any single strong union dominating the General Council, but in practice...two of the largest unions...are able to secure the election of candidates of whom they approve...Everyone here must surely know that before elections take place leaders of unions seek out their opposite numbers and bargain with them to support their candidates...The elections are determined by huckstering, bullying even blackmail....

(Brighton T.U.C. 1954, p.486.)

Here is room for plenty of activity. In other words 'people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones' or 'brother know thyself'. 'Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer'.

The crying need of the moment is for some men of courage to stand out, calling a halt on attacking shop stewards and instead open out an umbrella under which can be centralised and mobilised all these active, sensitive men and women into action for their class. The ordinary men and women in the factories are quite sound. They deserve and are entitled to a much more intelligent and sympathetic leadership.

THE POWER OF THE EXECUTIVE

The power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred, and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them without a violation of their natural birthright.

JOHN MILTON.

in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, 1648.

ON THE UP AND UP

That, it is our confident hope, will be the 1960 story of Labour Monthly's circulation figures. The hope is buoyed up by the past year's campaigning efforts which have shown that two things particularly have brought results. They are persistence and the readiness to seize opportunities.

These campaign notes have time and again urged an approach to groups of people with articles of special interest to them. We have done this successfully, for example, by writing to miners' lodges drawing attention to mining articles and asking for orders for that number. To those who have ordered we have written again, sometimes several times, always with reference to mining or to some other article we felt to be of interest to the miners. We have done the same with engineering workers, railwaymen and printers. We have sold goodly numbers and more importantly we have in the course of a few months added close on twenty more lodges, union branches and shop stewards' committees who have an official regular order of the magazine. With your help we can do much more in that respect.

If you are an engineering worker you could make a start with this number with J. R. Scott's spirited answer to attacks on shop stewards. There is no question about it, there will be a ready sale among engineering workers up and down the country who know and respect Joe Scott for his years of leadership in the industry. We are tackling shop stewards' committees, union branches, district committees and the like. I reckon that every engineering worker who reads Labour Monthly could sell at least one more copy this month. Will you have a try? We had in a very nice letter and donation from Birmingham students. Perhaps it's a bad time of the year to do it, but could we ask them and others of our student readers to consider sales to overseas students of this number with its valuable Africa and China articles.

Our manager and a stalwart supporter seized the opportunity of the Blackpool Conference to sell 70 L.M.s which thus went where they will do most good. What's on in your part of the world and would you have a go at selling there?

The campaign form is on page 48. If you want a quantity we are prepared to supply them on credit. If you want just one more, whip in your 1s. 6d.

Bear in mind—persistence pays, so let's stick at it.

G.B.

AFRICA IN 1960

R. Page Arnot

WELL, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan is back; back for a few days in Downing Street before he goes off again, back from his jaunt to Paris just before Christmas. And now Prime Minister Harold Macmillan is off again, this time for a whole month, this time to Africa.

Why Africa? What is his concern in Africa? For the same reason that nearly every speaker from the floor in the Labour Party Blackpool conference had Africa on his lips, that every newspaper has items nearly every day (it used to be about once a month) on Africa, that the Monckton Commission on Central Africa took up the time of the Parliamentary Labour Party in the first week of December, that the main business of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in October, 1959, was also Central Africa, that the Royal Consort, the Duke of Edinburgh, had to fly out in November to Ghana in West Africa, whither at the insistence of Dr. Nkrumah, the Queen too, once the expected royal babe is weaned, will take flight in 1961; and, finally, that in the City of London a hundred boards of directors of very big firms never stop pondering and counting over their investments in Africa. Africa is the target of all attention. Why?

The continent of Africa is in the forefront because the peoples of Africa are now in the forefront of the struggle to end colonialism. Africa, thrice the size of Europe, after being for three centuries the centre of the slave-trade whose profits built up European capitalism (and particularly British capitalism) has in this last hundred years been divided up amongst the European powers as their colonial territories to be plundered and 'developed' as sources of raw materials and cheap labour: divided up and then re-divided by the first world war of 1914-18 and the second world war of 1939-45. There was the German Empire in Africa (Tanganyika in East Africa, Cameroons and Togoland in West Africa, and territories in South-West Africa): and France and Britain whose empires reached their greatest extent in 1919, shared out the booty at the Treaty of Versailles. There was the Italian Empire (Tripoli and Cyrenaica in North Africa, Eritrea and Ethiopia and Somaliland in North-East Africa)—all gone by the end of 1945. There remained the British, French, Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese Empires in Africa, made up of colonies, protectorates and mandated territories.

THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA

Independent African States

In 1959

MOROCCO

TUNISIA

LIBYA

EGYPT

SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

GHANA

GUINEA

LIBERIA (in 1940 the only independent
African state)

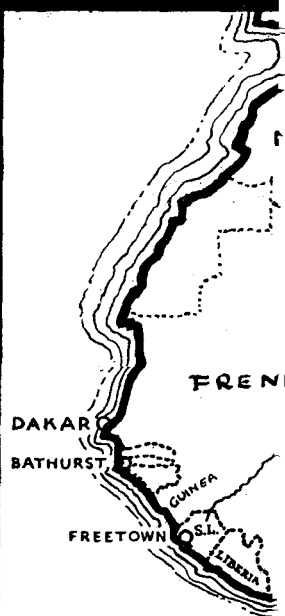
In 1960 add :

NIGERIA

SOMALILAND

CAMEROONS

TOGOLAND





For how long would they remain? The answer has come very quickly. Not by external war with rivals but by the internal pressure of the once subjected peoples of Africa, the chains have been broken, first in one place, then in another. The vaunted empires are crumbling from within. Africa, once the happy hunting ground both of the exterminators of big game and of the exploiters of human beings, is on the way to become the possession of its own peoples. On the way only—for great struggles lie ahead: but the struggles for emancipation are in progress.

The Africans saw how the peoples of Asia got their political independence from 1945 onwards; saw from 1950 onwards how the greatest of the Asian countries, China, had not only thrown over imperialist domination but was linked with the other countries of socialism; saw in these last two years the spectacular socialist advance of over a third of mankind. The movement for national liberation spread in Africa and gathered speed gaining momentum from the Afro-Asian conference of April, 1955, at Bandung in Indonesia, from the eight-day conference in Ghana of eight Independent African States in April, 1958, from the Accra conference of all African peoples in December, 1958, and from every kind of struggle. Already along the northern coast of Africa, the southern shores of the Mediterranean are studded with countries that have gained their independence—and only in Algeria is the struggle unfinished. Already on the west coast of Africa political independence (though not yet economic independence) has been gained in these last three years by Ghana and by Guinea, by one state after another, from both the British and French imperialists, who elsewhere are being compelled to make such concessions in the way of electoral rights (mostly trifling) and execute such other manœuvres as they hope will stave off the fatal day when their political domination comes to an end. And meantime there have been revolts in the Belgian Congo in January, 1959, in its mandated territory of Ruanda-Urundi in November, 1959, and in other parts of equatorial Africa.

But even more significant than the sectional advance of the various peoples in Africa is the most recent change, the development of a common consciousness amongst all the arising nations of the Continent. Not only was this clearly set forth in the resolutions of the Accra Conference* of December, 1958 (attended by

*The fraternal address of Dr. DuBois, the 90-year-old leader of United States Negroes, was printed in *Labour Monthly* of February, 1959.

representatives of 62 organisations from 28 countries), but the leadership there elected has striven to co-ordinate all African struggles, while at the end of November there was formed an All-African Federation of Trade Unions. Further, only last autumn the five-day conference of *nine* independent African States—Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt (United Arab Republic), Sudan and Ethiopia—resolved at their meeting in Liberia to call upon ‘the conscience of the world and the United Nations’ to help dependent territories to achieve independence, while the Conference received a significant message from Under-Secretary of State Douglas Dillon stating that they could count ‘on the help and understanding of the U.S.A. for the legitimate aspirations of the African peoples’. Thus, to all the nations of Africa the call for independence has sounded both from Accra and from the nine states which will be twelve in number this year 1960 when Nigeria and the mandated territories of French Cameroons and Somaliland reach their goal. If the African struggle for national liberation reached a great height in 1959 it is fairly certain that the upsurge in 1960 will be even greater. It is high time, think the imperialists, that Prime Minister Macmillan should undertake an African journey.

BRITISH AFRICA

The parts of Africa under the British crown, thirty times the size of the United Kingdom, are conventionally put in four main divisions:

West Africa (Nigeria alone four times the size of the United Kingdom with 34,000,000 inhabitants).

East Africa (over seven times the size of the United Kingdom and comprising Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar).

Central Africa (three territories, in all amounting to five times the size of the United Kingdom).

Southern Africa (comprising the Union of South Africa, which has annexed also South-West Africa in defiance of the United Nations and covets the three High Commission territories of Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland).

In less than twenty territories thus geographically arranged there is, as in the rest of Africa, every kind of society from primitive relations to capitalist relations; hunting, pastoral and agricultural peoples; with different languages, religions and customs; different forms of internal government and different forms of government imposed upon them, with every gradation of direct and indirect rule—all beneath their growing common consciousness as Africans,

but all making the task of national liberation extremely complex. And more recently there is the complexity of the concessions wrung from the imperialists, ranging from minor (and often paltry) forms of representation up to what used to be called 'dominion status'—and it is only to these last that Macmillan is paying his visit. But however complicated and diverse the conditions—and a similar diversity in India was always used by the imperialists, notably in the Simon Commission of 1930, as a knockdown argument against political independence—there is one broad and clear distinction in British Africa which gives the clue to all the problems, both actual and factitious. This is the distinction between the territories blessed with European settlers and those without this encumbrance. Look at the map of Africa, or think of the recent history of Africa. Where have the sharp conflicts and savage repressions taken place? Precisely in Kenya (seven years Emergency rule from 1952 till a month ago), in Central Africa (especially in the last two years) and in the Union of South Africa—the lands under the domination of the white intruders into Africa.

Why did they go just to these places and not to every land of Africa under the Union Jack? The answer would be a long history, a tale of battle, murder and sudden death; but, briefly, they went to healthy and sunny climes where the land was good and could be got easily often by force or fraud. But there they are, these land-grabbers; and where they are there is trouble, abundant trouble for all concerned, colour-bar, forced labour, penal laws, emergency proclamations, and 'police states'. In Kenya, where the end of the seven years 'emergency' has just been proclaimed a few months after the Hola-hola prison camp atrocities brought shame upon the name of Lennox-Boyd, the Tory Secretary for the Colonies, and where Jomo Kenyatta, after his long captivity, is still denied his right to move freely within his own country, the white settlers in the Highlands are there entrenched to frustrate the claim of the Africans to proper representation. This month in London Tom Mboya, Odinga and other African leaders will find the Colonial Office stubbornly opposed to any claim that Kenya should follow in the footsteps of Ghana and Nigeria. Before the people of Kenya there stretches a period of long and difficult struggle—because of the settlers, because of that one per cent in a total Kenya population of six-and-a-half millions. Only 63,000 of them! Why, they would all fit into fifteen ocean liners, or into three liners making five voyages. Macmillan, however, on his African journey is leaving Kenya severely alone.

The Prime Minister is going only to the four states that are this year members of the British Commonwealth—namely, Ghana, Nigeria, and the two ‘settler dominions’ of central and south Africa. Ghana (independent in 1957) and Nigeria (independent in 1960) are two lands without settlers: and to refuse their political demands, to repress their national liberation movements throughout the ‘fifties would have meant huge armies of occupation (there are half-a-million French troops in Algeria with one-quarter of the population) and a strain greater than the British government could bear. So, willy-nilly, after years of manœuvring, the political concessions that could not have been withheld, have been made: and now all that the Prime Minister can do is to be as polite as possible, hoping that they will be the same.

It is the opposite extreme when he gets to the Union of South Africa, where the Dutch, British and other European settlers are over a fifth of the total population and deprive the Africans of civil rights, proclaiming the fascist doctrine of *Apartheid*. This *Apartheid* or ‘segregation of the coloured natives from the whites’ means much more than segregation and is actually the setting up of the institutions of a slave state. The dilemma for Macmillan is clear. It was put to him in the House of Commons by the Labour opposition in the first week of December. Is he going there to approve *Apartheid* or condemn it? His *avant-courier* Field Marshal Montgomery is reported in November there to have given his approval. The Prime Minister gave no answer in parliament. Nor did he state his purpose in visiting the three High Commission territories abutting on the Union of South Africa. One of them, Basutoland, has been a place of refuge for Mrs. Mafekeng, the hunted president of the African Food and Canning Workers’ Union,* whose persecution has brought a resolution of protest from the Labour Party and has been an obvious factor in getting the T.U.C. General Council to consider (only ‘to consider’ so far) whether or not South African goods should be put under boycott, as the Africans themselves demand. Is Macmillan going to do a deal with the *Apartheid*-mongers, by which Basutoland (and Swaziland and Bechuanaland) would be handed over to them to exploit, while they in turn would engage to defer for a time their cherished plans of breaking with the British Crown? The answer to such-like questions, however, was given already in the United Nations

*In her message from Basutoland published December 9 Mrs. Mafekeng said :

To all food and canning workers I say stand firm and rally yourselves around the workers’ organisations. Not even deportations or banishments of your leaders will stop you from fighting for better conditions in your country.

Assembly two months ago. Sixty-seven nations cast their vote against the *Apartheid*-mongers' behaviour in South Africa. Three only voted for, namely, de Gaulle's France, fascist Portugal and the representative of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, headed by Harold Macmillan.

Meanwhile, as if in answer to the 67 to 3 vote of the United Nations, the South African cabinet have chosen (and the Queen has accepted the choice) no other than Mr. Swart as the new Governor-General. This Swart, as Minister of Justice, rigged up the notorious treason trial of nearly two hundred political opponents which, going on for the last two years and more, has brought protest after protest, even from *The Times*. This Swart is the sjambok-man, who holds that Africans must be governed 'by the whip'. This latter-day Simon Legree is now to be the Queen's representative—about a hundred years after the Government of Her Majesty (then Queen Victoria) was busily engaged in the abolition of the slave trade in Africa.

The continent of Africa, with its growing struggle for national liberation, is the scene of Macmillan's journey. But behind the scenes and below the stage settings there is machinery at work, machinery that is powered in the City of London. The underlying realities on the imperialist side are the interests of the big firms, the big banks and the big investment companies. Their interests (and the interests of the other imperialists in their respective finance centres) are spread all over the continent, alike among colonial dependencies and independent states. Their agents are in parliament, and leading figures of the Tory Party are deeply involved as shareholders in many of these monopolies. Therefore, while the struggle for political independence is coming on fast, there is a further struggle ahead—for economic independence and the right to build up their own resources.

The Central African Federation will be treated in a separate article.

THESE 'REBELLIOUS NATIVES'

The Dunfermline weavers are enemies to subordination. So prevalent is the levelling spirit that few of the labourers or tradesmen will lift their Scots bonnet or shew any mark of respect to those of the higher class.

(From a letter by Lord Dundonald to the
Lord Advocate, January 16, 1793.)

TORY GIMMICKS

Jack Mitchell *

THE return of the Tories to form the third consecutive government has led to the most controversial and critical debate ever to take place in the Labour Movement. The question is; after eight years of Tory rule, the Rent Acts, the credit squeeze, the deliberate creation of unemployment to suit financial interests, the inhuman treatment of the aged, Suez, Nyasaland and Hola, how were the Tories able to gain power for a further term of office?

True to form, the right wing of the movement who bear the main responsibility for Labour's defeat have the impudence to suggest that the solution lies in further deviations from socialism. Not just along lines of the present social reformist policy but to widen the reformist road still further. These people who lined up with the Tory policy of German Rearmament, who failed to give a constructive lead on the question of the hydrogen bomb, who indulge in phoney opposition to the class policies of the Tories and who in general have used the Labour Movement as an electioneering machine every few years, have the audacity to suggest, after losing three consecutive elections, that we should move still further to the right. Continuity of such a policy is tantamount to the destruction of the Labour Party and therefore calls for a vigorous challenge by all genuine socialists in the movement.

Let us face the position fairly and squarely. The reason, not so much for the Tory victory, but the Labour defeat, was connected with the very policies that Labour has pursued over the past few years. Their action has led the electorate to believe that little difference exists between the parties and if capitalism can operate to the advantage of the people, obviously the party of the capitalists are the best managers of such a system. The Tories were able to meet Labour's challenge, if it can be called a challenge, on such gimmicks as 'We have never had it so good'. The electorate, confused by the failure of the Labour Party to present a constructive, socialist alternative, saw Labour as a party competing with the Tories on the basis of 'Anything you can do, we can do better'.

With this background, it now becomes the essential task of the Labour Movement to learn the lesson of the errors of the past few years. We have to start now to convince the electorate who are predominantly working class and whose votes returned the Tories

*Mr. Jack Mitchell, as many of our readers will know, is the Shop Stewards Convenor of the Body Division in Ford's motor works in Dagenham.

to power, that the supposed prosperity that we are now enjoying is based on the economics of the capitalist jungle. It is obvious that, apart from those suffering unemployment and short-time working in Northern Ireland, Scotland and the North of England, together with the old age pensioners and the like who must have had no doubts about the theories and illusions of the present 'prosperity', many electors in their confusion fell victim to the subtle propaganda of the Tory party.

Such confusion can be understood in view of the right wing policies of Labour at a time when the workers are in receipt of comparably high wage packets by virtue of working excessive hours of overtime, and the opportunity to increase the packet by the wife also going to work. The effect of this has enabled them to take part in house purchase schemes, buy a car or perhaps both. They have been able to furnish their homes reasonably and to possess the comparative luxury of owning refrigerator, washing machine, T.V.

What the electorate have failed to understand is, that quite apart from the fact that they are giving up the leisure in life that they are entitled to (living to work rather than working to live), they are also dependent on capitalism maintaining the position whereby overtime and work for the wife remain available. Any deep thinking socialist knows full well that capitalism is absolutely incapable of maintaining such a position. Capitalism is and always will be subject to slumps and booms. We have gone through this to some degree during the last few years and, minor as it may seem, this alone makes a good enough case for socialist planning.

International capitalism is now attempting to prop itself up in the various countries involved, in an endeavour to cushion themselves against the ills of their own system. This is shown in the developing tendencies towards such blocs as the European Common Market, the Outer Seven and the Free Trade Area. Leading experts in the motor car industry, an industry which plays an ever increasingly important part in the country's economy, are openly admitting that the American market is far too vulnerable to be depended on and that all endeavours are necessary to break into the European market. The purpose of E.C.M. is of course to prevent such a break-through—in each area, however, it will be found that the United States monopolies have already established a whole range of subsidiaries.

The point of course in using these examples of the vulnerability of capitalism to even maintain the present so-called prosperity, is to emphasise that the mood of the electorate which ignored the

disastrous foreign policy of the Tories and those suffering at home through unemployment and inadequate pensions, also ignored the fact that the present standards are far from likely to remain stable under the present system. Unfortunately the right wing of the Labour Movement, to their utter discredit and shame, are attempting to convince us that capitalism is capable of controlling the worst evils of the system and all that is necessary is a reformist party to correct the *slight evils* that still exist. It is such leadership that will maintain the confusion in the minds of the electorate and pave the way for a continuity of Tory rule.

Welcome signs are that the right wing are not likely to have matters all their own way. The rank and file leadership of the trade union and Labour Movement is showing opposition to the disastrous policies being peddled by the reactionaries. The way forward for Labour will not be found in the Labour-Radical or Labour Reformist utterances of the Jays and Crosslands, nor for that matter with those Labour leaders who put up a sham opposition to the Jays and Crosslands on the basis that the present policy is good enough and all that is required is to convince the electorate.

Given the correct leadership, the workers will rally to the cause and reject the Tories. There is a socialist alternative to capitalism. This alternative must be pursued vigorously and with it must go a vigorous fight on the issues that face us and those still to come. Labour must fight for a summit meeting, the ending of the cold war and the multilateral banning of the H-bomb. They must adopt socialist forms of nationalisation as against the present form which is crippled by excessive compensation payments, benefits the capitalist class and is controlled by the bureaucrats who in many cases are directors of privately owned concerns.

Labour must concern itself with the struggle of the workers and throw its full weight behind the fight for higher wages and shorter hours. It must not be backward in telling the workers that, if they were amongst those who voted Tory, that they gave their votes to such organisations as the Shipbuilding and Engineering Employers who have refused to concede the just demands for wage increases and the forty-hour week during a period in which the Employers have never had it so good. In other words, Labour must go on the offensive. Only a vigorous class fight will put Labour back on the road to victory.

CORRECTION: The title of Wilfrid Macartney's well-known book is 'Walls Have Mouths' and not as given on the cover of our December issue.

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

Herbert Aptheker

CHANGE is in the air in the United States as it has not been for at least ten years. There is a sense of foreboding, or expectancy—depending upon one's point of view—that is almost palpable.

The predominant mood here today is best conveyed in the expression, 'fed up'. Much of this manifests itself in despair, cynicism, apathy: in the extraordinary sexuality and pornography, with 'literature' more and more becoming exercises in lubricity: in the unprecedented (even for America) rates of crime, especially crimes of violence, and a veritable epidemic of 'free world' ailments, especially those afflicting the mind: in steeply rising graphs depicting suicides, alcoholism, drug addiction, incidence of venereal disease. Meanwhile, one daily 'scandal' after another creates the newest sensation, from the forced retirement of the President's closest confidant, to T.V. frauds, to twelve-ounce 'pounds' of poultry for sale to the poor at doubly inflated prices, with the connivance of the highest public officials.

Underneath everything is the instability and very partial nature of our vaunted 'prosperity'. Consumer credit reached an all-time high in U.S. history this past November—a total of fifty billion dollars. The buying power of American farmers fell lower than before the war in mid-November, 1959. The Department of Agriculture reported that while the prices farmers received for their crops fell by 2 per cent in November, what they paid for things they needed rose by 1 per cent: as a result, 'the legal Federal yardstick for farmers' purchasing power dropped to 77 per cent, the lowest point since August, 1940'.

The general picture may be indicated in the title 'U.S. Economy on Trial' chosen for a lead article appearing in the rabidly anti-Communist weekly, *The New Leader* (November 30, 1959). The Editors remark on the fact that 'in recent weeks an increasing number of outstanding economists have joined in warning against the stagnation threatening this country's position as a major world power.' They mean, of course, bourgeois economists, and what they write is introductory to an article by W. S. Woytinsky, formerly of Johns Hopkins University, who demonstrates that the gross national product per head of the United States in 1958 was actually 1 per cent *below* that for 1953.

The expressions of concern over all these hallmarks of decay are becoming increasingly frequent and taking on a note of intense urgency in the more serious and responsible organs of the ruling class. Thus, for example, two succeeding issues of the *New York Times Magazine* have carried articles by leading professors analysing the apparent moral decay. Charles Frankel, of Columbia University, in the issue dated November 15, 1959, finds this to 'reflect a general distortion of values—a "market place" outlook that emphasises success regardless of how achieved'; Hans J. Morgenthau, of the University of Chicago, in the issue dated November 22, confesses himself appalled by 'a moral obtuseness which signifies the beginning of the end of civilised society'. Both professors ascribe the decay to 'the people' generally; they carefully avoid the slightest hint of class society, and ignore the existence of a socialist world. Yet, in both, there is a new sense of reality about their cry of alarm.

Mr. George F. Kennan, formerly U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., and now at Princeton University, addressing the Women's National Democratic Club recently, stated frankly that he did not think the United States had a good chance of competing successfully with the Soviet Union, because he could find here no viable national purpose, and he saw a disintegration of social values and civilised behaviour that was appalling. In this he was echoing Walter Lippmann's recent plea—and Lippmann always speaks with the highest echelons of the bourgeoisie in mind—'to stop huddling together for fear of Khrushchov's witchery, and to become again the confident and purposeful people, which, except when we have doped ourselves, we really are'. Of course, I think Mr. Lippmann knows that these kinds of 'pep talks' will not do the trick; and I think he knows that it is fatal to his plea that he dare not even pose the question of who has doped whom, and for what reason.

Finally, and only space limits this chronicle, the appalling crisis of American urban living shows no sign of abatement; on the contrary, day by day it intensifies. Thus, the American Jewish Committee, after a two-year study, reported on November 1, 1959, that 'criminal neglect' marked the development of U.S. cities; and that this neglect was creating 'serious intergroup tensions and dangerous race-relations problems'. It condemned the 'obsolescence of public and private facilities—schools, hospitals, housing and transportation', as a result of which, it maintained, 'vast sections of our major cities have become wastelands'. And, of course, as the Report

noted, the 'heaviest burden of these deteriorated conditions fell upon the low-income, non-white groups'.

And, as though all this were not enough, something else is causing a sense of 'profound uneasiness' here, in the words of Norman Cousins, editorialising in *The Saturday Review*:

The question is whether we can afford peace. Lending grim reality to this question is this headline in a recent New York newspaper: 'Fear of Peace Depresses Market'.
(November 14, 1959.)

None of the responsible and respectable analysts and commentators, however, no matter how great the alarm, permits himself to indicate the source of the decay and crisis he describes. None displays the insight of the great English socialist, William Morris, who some seventy years ago, noting essentially similar phenomena, if not yet on quite so debased and widespread a scale, wrote:

All these uglinesses are but the outward expression of the innate moral baseness into which we are forced by our present form of society, and it is futile to deal with it from the outside.

Actually, the forces from within who suffer the effects of this decay but who are not responsible for it, are active in the United States. We are now living in a period of rising political and class consciousness in this country. It is this in particular that I had in mind when I wrote, in opening this article that 'change is in the air'. The fact is that the general electorate in the United States has been moving slowly leftwards ever since the beginning of 1954. Every election—local and national—since then, with very rare exceptions, including the elections of November, 1959, have maintained this movement. It is compounded of a growing sense of opposition to dominant domestic and foreign policy. It manifests itself in mounting independent political activity and sentiment, growing revulsion with the Big Party 'machines', a rising degree of conscious labour and trade union political work, and a very sharply intensified level of Negro militancy and political development.

There is even present in this change a growing impatience with red-baiting. A lead article in the liberal magazine, *The Progressive* (November, 1959) is entitled, 'Anti-Communism Loses Its Punch': this article deals particularly with political developments in Illinois, but what it describes is a national phenomenon. Quite remarkable, in line with that, was the fact that a Communist candidate and trade unionist, Archie Brown, received over 33,000 votes (15 per cent of the total cast) in the November, 1959, elections in San Francisco. There is a growing desire to hear from Communists themselves, and notably in the universities and colleges the pall of apathy has lifted and considerable interest is displayed in Marxism and in Socialism.

The intensification of the struggle of the Negro people—and parents have now put their children in the front-lines of the battle with them—is a factor of the greatest consequence in the United States today. More recent is the notable rise in working class militancy, highlighted by the 110-day heroic struggle of the 530,000 steel workers, a struggle only momentarily muted due to the Taft-Hartley injunction forcing deeply-embittered men back into the plants. Once again, the bourgeois press is noticing the change; the *New York Times Magazine* (November 29) features an article by its so-called Labour-management expert, A. H. Raskin, entitled 'Deep Shadow Over Our Factories'; the 'deep shadow' is that prematurely interred Marxist 'hoax', class struggle. Mr. Raskin finds 'what amounts to an outbreak of class warfare'—and this after fifteen years of capitalist 'prosperity' and right here, in America, in the Land of People's Capitalism! Perhaps the Un-American Activities Committee should look into Mr. Raskin! Ominous is the fact that Mr. Raskin concludes his *Times* article by remarking that collective bargaining 'is not a God-given right', and that if it does not function well, then the Government must step in and directly control labour negotiations. This is in line with a developing and very serious anti-labour line being taken by Big Business and, increasingly, by the Administration. On December 4, 1959, Mr. Frederick H. Mueller, the Secretary of Commerce, addressing the annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers—a leading organisation of ultra reactionary monopolists—urged that laws be enacted forbidding industry wide bargaining in basic industries, and specifically applying anti-trust legislation to the strike activities of national unions.

There are signs of change in ideological circles, too. While only a year or two ago, the 'New Conservatism' was in full swing, and almost every week brought forth another book or article attacking democratic theory or glorifying the Robber Barons, that condition no longer exists. On the contrary, one gets now such books as M. Morton Auerbach's *The Conservative Illusion* (Columbia University Press, 1959) arguing a theme conveyed in the title; or articles like 'American Intellectuals and American Democracy', by William G. Carleton of the University of Florida in the *Antioch Review* (Summer, 1959), in which anti-democratic ideologies are bitterly attacked. Indeed, a work vigorously denouncing anti-Communism and even defending Communists, has recently appeared: *Pride of State*, by Joseph P. Morray (Beacon Press, Boston, 1959). This is all the more remarkable since its author is now a Visiting Professor

of Law at the University of California, and had previously served as a Naval Attaché for the U.S. Embassies in Madrid and Paraguay.

Probably the greatest single change, however, of the past ten or twelve months has been in connection with the Soviet Union, peaceful co-existence, and the widest kind of questioning of the Dulles-Acheson Cold War foreign policy. This has reached major national proportions and is producing the most intense soul-searching among leading politicians and sharp fissures among various elements within the bourgeoisie and within top levels of the two major parties. Its catalyst was Sputnik; and the awakening and soul-searching that that event forced upon the U.S. ruling circles and among the population generally, has been accelerating ever since, with one sensation after another, coming from the lands of Socialism, rocking the Cold War boys back on their heels. The latest sharp blow was the visit by Premier Khrushchov; its impact has not yet worn away. Of course, the Cold War manipulators are still hard at work and retain great influence, but compared with the situation three or even two years ago they are in a much less powerful situation now.

The problem of greatest acuteness as the 1960 elections approach is to consolidate the feelings of unrest and the desire for a progressive change; above all, to intensify the political activity and consciousness of the labour movement, and to bring about a significant degree of labour-Negro unity in time really to influence that election. At the same time, the need for an organised and national peace movement, with a viable political direction exerting real influence, remains critical. Politically, the situation, as this is written, is highly ambiguous and amorphous. There exists very real potential for delivering a smashing blow against reaction and war-making in the 1960 elections, but whether the strength to deliver that blow can be effectively organised in time is the question.

THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY

New York is a sprawling, voracious monster of a city. It covers 315 square miles; it is crammed with some 8 million people. At least a million, a full eighth of its total population, live in packed squalor, six and ten to a room, in slum tenements whose mere existence is a nauseous stench on the air—tenements so rat-infested that, on the average, one hundred persons a year are badly chewed and, so far this year, two have been actually gnawed to death. Symbolically, perhaps, there are in New York more rats than people—an estimated 9 million. (*New York Nation*, 31.10.1959)

APPEASING ADENAUER

Gordon Schaffer

A NEWLY-ELECTED Labour M.P. who had been worried for a long time at the clear evidence of the re-emergence of the Nazis in Western Germany made it his first job, when he took his seat in the House of Commons, to put down a question on this danger. His question was refused. Denazification, he was informed, is not the concern of Her Majesty's Government.

The British people suffered vast losses in blood and treasure to destroy the danger of Nazism. Their government gave solemn pledges and signed treaties with the rest of the anti-Nazi alliance to ensure that the dark forces which spread murder over continents would never be allowed to revive. Today the elements responsible for backing Hitler and sustaining his aggression, are as powerful as ever. Krupp cocks a snoot at the Allied order to break up his empire of coal and steel. Friedrich Flick, sentenced as a war criminal at Nuremberg, is one of the richest and most powerful men in Germany. He is staking a claim to share in the development of nuclear arms. Dr. Adenauer sent him a message last year on the occasion of his 75th birthday:

You have led a great and amazing life of achievement, in long and self-sacrificing toil, despite all the blows of destiny against our people and yourself, personally (*New Statesman*, December 5, 1959).

Dr. Oberlaender, who has been proved to have played a prominent part in the Nazi atrocities in Poland and the Ukraine, is head of the Ministry of Refugees in the West German Government. Factual evidence is available to show that large numbers of judges in Western Germany willingly administered the Nazi laws, including those against the Jews. The former Nazis are back in national and local administration and above all in the armed forces.

By the mid 1960s, according to Paul Johnson reporting on Nato discussions in the *Evening Standard* (December 1, 1959), West Germany will outnumber all other Nato powers on the ground and with their target of 1,000 front-line aircraft will be second only to the U.S.A. in the air. The West German militarists are openly manœuvring to secure more of the key posts in the commands.

Economically, West Germany, aided by the Americans in the re-equipment of her industry much more effectively than Britain ever was, is rapidly passing Britain in many of the main sectors of production. She is pushing out into world markets and as the

major partner in the six-nation common market offers a standing threat to British economy.

This is where we came in. After the first world war, the British Governments of the day opposed the progressive forces in Germany which sought to draw the lessons from the defeat of the Kaiser's militarism, acquiesced in the illegal rearmament of the country and finally backed Hitler, and the industrialists who financed him, as the 'bulwark against Bolshevism'. We now know from German documents that an alliance of the countries threatened by Nazi aggression including the Soviet Union, would undoubtedly have halted Hitler's aggression. But Neville Chamberlain was much more concerned to rush forward the recognition of Franco Spain and to appease Hitler with promises of a free hand in the East.

Today, everyone applauds Sir Winston Churchill because he warned where this appeasement of German militarism would lead. But the lesson has been forgotten. Mr. Denis Healey, whom Mr. Gaitskell would dearly love to see in charge of foreign affairs for the Labour Party, propounds the theory that West German rearmament has paid dividends because the Russians are now ready to negotiate. Mr. George Brown is allowed to wreck Labour's election chances by outvying the Tories in the demand for more arms for Nato. Labour M.P.s vote at the assembly of Western Union for a policy aimed at spreading nuclear arms all over Western Europe. Some hundred Labour M.P.s. who put down a motion urging that there shall be no nuclear arms for the ex-Nazi generals at least pending summit talks, are refused a debate.

Mr. Macmillan shows that he is more ready to appease Dr. Adenauer than to meet the clearly expressed wish of the British people. He throws overboard the modest plan for some measure of disengagement in Germany and Europe, which he agreed during his talks in Moscow. The Adenauer Government chooses this moment to stage a trial of leaders of the West German peace movement. According to the indictment, men and women who have struggled publicly for disarmament, co-existence and for measures to prevent the revival of militarism are 'members of a criminal, secret organisation directed to the overthrow of the constitutional principals of the Federal Republic'. The Federal Republic goes even further. It seeks a Court Order declaring illegal the Association of Victims of the Nazi regime, using the very clause in the constitution designed to guard against the revival of Nazism. As always, the Communist Party was attacked first; and once it was

declared illegal, the way was open for further attacks. Adenauer, who juggled with the constitution in order to stay in power, is supremely confident that he can wreck the chances of success at the summit talks. Examine his statements and you will see that he is talking the language of Foster Dulles—negotiation from strength and restoration of capitalism in the German Democratic Republic.

One of the difficulties in awakening public opinion to this terrible peril is the web of lies with which the German problem has been enveloped. The *Manchester Guardian* proclaims that the division of Germany was due to the Russian blockade in 1948. The truth is that Germany was divided when the Americans, unilaterally and without even consulting their allies, issued new currency in the area now comprising the Federal Republic, thereby forcing the Russians to impose controls to prevent the whole economy of Eastern Germany from being wrecked. The diary of Forrestal and the memoirs of General Clay and Senator Vandenberg make clear that the United States was prepared for atomic war then and other news leaked at the time to show that the Dulles plan was the build-up of forces in Western Europe, including Germany, in order to back atomic attack with ground forces. Far from making the Russians ready to talk, rearmament of Western Germany finalised the division of Europe for decades to come—and the facts are on record to show that the Russians warned this would be the case.

Today the problem is to find solutions which accept the facts of the situation—a divided Berlin, the existence of two German states with different social and economic systems. Adenauer's dream of taking over the territory of the German Democratic Republic and adding it to a Western alliance, which would at once threaten war against Poland is utterly impossible. But he has no more abandoned it than Hitler abandoned his dream of a Reich stretching to the Urals.

There is still time for us to learn the lesson of history, to give our support to the forces in Western Germany who despite persecution are opposing the return to the path of militarism. And to understand that the German Democratic Republic which has destroyed the forces that created the Nazi regime, must be the ally of those who seek a peaceful solution of the German problem.

WAR AND PROFITS

The war, our best customer, is dead.

(Robert Owen.)

TEN YEARS IN TEN MILE INN

David Crook

I HAVE just been back to the Chinese village of Ten Mile Inn—after an absence of over a decade. My wife and I had spent the better part of a year there in 1948, witnessing the last stages of land reform. When I went back this summer, Ten Mile Inn belonged to a people's commune.

How had the peasants shot ahead from the realisation of their age-long ambition—private ownership of the land—to ownership by the collective? How had they come to give up this hard-won, individualist economy for one containing the first shoots of communism? The aim of my visit was to find an answer.

It had taken six days to walk from the Ten Mile Inn to Peking when the capital was liberated in 1949, the railway line wrecked in the fighting. This time it took ten hours—eight in a comfortable sleeper and two more in an outsize jeep. Suddenly we were there. I had not recognised the once familiar approach, for a broad new road now runs right over the threshing floors separating the upper and lower parts of the village.

Soon I was walking along the narrow cobbled village street and stopped at the village co-operative store, which had sold mainly salt, matches, cigarettes and oil. Now it stocks radio sets, sewing machines, gramophones, acetylene lamps, alarm clocks, thermos flasks, torches and fountain pens. That evening, Wang Shi-tang, the manager of the store, dropped in for a chat. He had been village head; now he manages the co-operative stores in eight of the commune's villages. 'Yes, it's different now,' he smiled. 'We can't satisfy the demand. Take cloth. Right after land reform practically everyone used to wear homespun. Now hardly anyone does. See my shirt? You never saw me in machine-made cloth before, did you. And the women aren't satisfied with cheap stuff at three *mao* (about tenpence) a foot these days. They think nothing of spending eight *mao* a foot. And they want flowers on it!'

The village production team leader, Wang Shao-jen, was just back from a day's work, with his team, on the railway which is to pass within three miles of Ten Mile Inn. He had been listening to Wang Shi-tang with half an ear as he browsed through the Communist Party journal *Red Flag*. During the land reform, though secretary of the village Communist Party branch, he had been scarcely literate. 'Commune members of today are better off than

the landlords were,' he said. 'Why, d'you know, we have three thermos flasks in our home and all eleven of us have rubber overshoes, cotton blankets, flowered quilts. And I'm planning to buy a bike and a wrist-watch.'

I turned to a third visitor, Wang Wen-sheng. He had been a beggar in the old days, I knew; and once, during a famine, his desperate father had tried to sell him for a bushel of millet. 'I've no real worries now,' he said. 'I'm in charge of ten of the commune mules and donkeys. We've had two children since you left. We keep our own chickens. You come round tomorrow and I'll give you some apples off the tree in our courtyard.'

From talks like this and interviews with leaders of this commune of 37,000 people I pieced together the picture of the last ten years in Ten Mile Inn.

Before the land reform most of the people lived for a good part of the year on chaff, wild herbs and watery gruel 'so thin you could see the reflection of the moon in it.' It was no rare thing for a family of five to share one ragged quilt. In the very poorest families husband and wife would share one pair of trousers, to be worn by whichever one had to go out. In a nearby village there was a farmhand who scraped together enough for a suit of clothes when he got married. He wore it for thirty-two years.

There were just over fourteen hundred people in Ten Mile Inn then, and just seven hundred acres of land. This would have worked out at half an acre a head—if it had been evenly distributed. But it was not. Eight households of landlords and 'rich peasants' owned 120 acres; and landlords living in other villages another ninety or so. There were forty families of 'well-off middle peasants'—who managed to put aside a little each year. The remaining 373 families had only 218 acres between them. But this again was not evenly distributed. In the household of the present secretary of the village Communist Party branch there were then four persons; they had one-sixth of an acre.

This was how it was in 'normal' times. In 1942-3 there was a famine. People went begging, sold their children, hanged themselves. In forty-nine of the poorest families fifty-nine people starved to death. But by this time, as the peasants say, 'the sun was already rising—in the west.' Units of the Communist-led Eighth Route Army, driving eastwards, were already in the area. In Ten Mile Inn, as everywhere they went, they had begun to lead the people in a series of social, political and economic reforms, culminating in the completion of land reform in 1948. Landlord and rich peasant

exploitation was abolished and New Democracy set up. Famine became a thing of the past in Ten Mile Inn.

All this was done on the basis of equitable individual ownership of the land. But though half an acre of land per head may make for justice, it does not permit prosperity. The individual farmer no longer starved to death: he lived. But his life must still be one of poor food and backbreaking toil—so long as he hoed his own row, with next to no capital and tools which had changed but little in a couple of thousand years.

The first step towards overcoming the limitations was to develop mutual aid. Implements and animals were pooled. Labour was exchanged. An elaborate system of accounting grew up to record man and animal labour days given and received. Again production went up. Living standards rose—for the majority. But not for all.

Some farmers were lazy or inefficient. Some simply had bad luck, with the delicate balance of the family unit upset by illness or death; whenever a parent died his or her share of the land was sold to ensure a proper burial. On the other hand some families were far better off than the average, through having exceptionally good land and plenty of hands in the family. These stayed out of the mutual-aid groups and hired labour. Those at the other end of the scale—with the poorest land and fewest hands—also withdrew from the mutual-aid groups in order to work as labourers for the better-off. The new economic and political standards ensured that they were paid reasonable wages, but as wage-workers they were exploited: not as they had been by the landlords and rich peasants; but still exploited.

In short, within a few years after the land reform some were getting richer, others poorer. Land, houses, draught animals and tools were being put on sale and finding buyers. In 1951 alone in the area which now constitutes the commune to which Ten Mile Inn belongs, 200 families sold land and 100 sold housing. Class differentiation was reappearing and the first faint fears of a return to the bad old days. Clearly individual farming was no solution: the answer must be collectivism.

There were already three agricultural producers' co-operatives in the county, one in a village nearby. This was a 'low level co-op', not fully socialist. One half of proceeds were shared out according to the amount of land each family invested, the other according to the amount of work done. Within a year the output per *mu* on the co-op land was well above the average for the village: 190 *jīn* on individual farms; 210 *jīn* in the mutual-aid groups; and 230 *jīn* in

the co-op. Such figures were powerful propagandists. That year the number of co-ops in the county rose to twelve. By 1954 it was a hundred and five—including one of nineteen families in Ten Mile Inn.

But this advance, like every other, was won only by heart-searching, struggle and bitter experience. Take the case of a 'well-off middle peasant' called Meng in a village near Ten Mile Inn. There were four in the family, with six acres and a mule. When the co-op was first set up Meng joined it. But he found the work uncomfortably strenuous, for he had been accustomed to relying at rush periods on hired labour. Besides, quite a number of the better-off peasants had not joined the co-op. So he pulled out. But his daughter-in-law was a member of the Youth League: she did her utmost to persuade him to change his mind, to no avail. Feeling she could never be happy in such a family (her husband was away at university) she threatened to apply for a divorce. Meng had to choose between his daughter-in-law and his mule. He chose the mule, reasoning: 'My son will always be able to find himself another wife, once he's graduated. But it won't be so easy for me to get another mule. Inside the co-op I can hardly call my mule my own. Out of it, I've got my mule and my son. And in time I'll have another daughter-in-law as well.' But old Meng, after all, was her father-in-law, not her husband. And this was the new society. She gave up the idea of divorce and insisted on her husband and herself setting up their own household. This meant dividing the property—the land and other means of production, including the mule. The family's affairs came to the attention of the local Communist leaders. They said to the girl that 'dividing the family' would be too hard on the old man, putting undue pressure on him. Peasants must have freedom to join or stay out or withdraw from the co-ops. They must be convinced by facts. So the family went on farming on their own for over a year. It was a hard grind, but they kept at it doggedly. The family's yield for the year turned out to be 210 *jin* per *mu*. The co-op's was 245 *jin*. Old Meng applied for readmittance to the co-op; and after being allowed to cool his heels for a while was accepted.

This little verse became popular in the locality:

*You can't build a wall with only one stone,
You can't build a house with one beam.
The co-op's far better than working alone;
Together our strength is supreme.*

By the end of 1955 there were twelve co-ops in Ten Mile Inn, comprising 97% of the population.

But this advance, like every other, brought its own set of problems, the solution to which was another stride forward.

'The co-op's far better than working alone.' But what sort of co-op was it to be? How to distribute the increased output of co-operation? Families with little land and plenty of able-bodied workers were all for increasing the payment for labour and reducing that for land, even for dropping payment on land altogether. Those with more land than labour tended to think the opposite: some—like old Meng—might have liked to pull out of the co-ops altogether if they had not feared being unable to hire labour. Next, how best to use land, labour and draught animals and to improve implements?

(to be continued in our next issue)

BOOKS

Le Mythe Adenauer

E-N. Dzelepy

Les Editions Politiques, Brussels. 65 Belgian francs. 198 pp.

NOT nearly enough is known in this country about the gentleman of this name. Otherwise he would never get away so successfully with his myth. To some he is the heroic architect of German resurrection in the cause of freedom. To others a stupid, obstinate, egotistical old man, unable to recognise the needs of a new age. One aspect of the myth is as untrue, and as useful to him, as the other.

Adenauer is not stupid, and not outmoded. His career is entirely consistent and he pursues in 1959 the same object he pursued in 1919 and by the same method. His object? The aggrandizement of Germany, first economically dominating Western Europe, later expanding to the east by arms. He is the third term in the sequence: Kaiser, Hitler, Adenauer. This purpose is a real danger today as it was in 1914 and 1939. The method? Precisely the

same as after the first world war, when he tried to organise a Rhine-land separatism based on France. To enable expansionist Germany to escape the consequences of defeat by organising first a separate Western state based on Ruhr industry, Catholic reaction, and foreign military backing dually stimulated by anti-Communism and investment prospects. He no more cares for the reunification of Germany, in the sense of an equal and voluntary coming together of all Germans, than he cares for the man in the moon. All he wants is subjection of progressive, democratic, protestant elements in Germany to *his* pattern, 'unity' on his terms, and he is prepared to see unification wait years if need be, till that opportunity offers. As he planned also after the first world war. And the plan is going along nicely now, thank you. Up to a point. The man who was called 'the best American in Europe' is that just so long as the Americans are going his way. N.A.T.O., European Common Market, rearmament, refusal to accept the existence of the DDR and the post-war eastern frontiers. All that is what he wants.

And he will spit at Eisenhower just as venomously as he spits at British politicians who begin to fear West German trade competition and a West German H-Bomb, the moment Mr. E. or any other American shows signs of crossing him.

All this is excellently brought out and exposed in Mr. Dzelepy's timely little volume. The author has a racy style as his chapter headings show: 'The "Great European"', 'The Guardian Angel of tension', 'The saboteur of detente', 'The last champion of the Cold War'—these are only a few. And he packs his story with pertinent facts and quotations, many from Adenauer himself and the official biographers. A versatile political writer—on Cyprus, Suez, the Rapaki plan—I could wish his work were better known over here. Old fogies like me, who remember 'non-intervention' and the Spanish War, may recall his *Britain in Spain* appearing here in the thirties as by 'The Unknown Diplomat'! This book on Adenauer, too, could be enlightening to the English if it were translated.

IVOR MONTAGU.

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tively, for until June, 1957 Sir Herbert Brittain was Second Secretary in charge of Home Finance and Supply in the Treasury. The other book is a detailed comparison of the different kinds of budgeting systems used by the Central Government, the local authorities, the nationalised industries and the hospital service, the general theme being that a good budgeting system is essential to administrative efficiency. A distinguished civil servant once remarked that the House of Commons had less control over finance than any other Parliamentary Assembly he had seen. This is not the kind of proposition discussed in these books. They do not delve far below the surface, but they accurately accomplish what they set out to do.

JAMES HARVEY.

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Alvin Redman. 296 pp. 15s.

THIS book should appeal to every traveller—whether by armchair or vehicle—for its essentially practical advice on going by car to the Soviet Union. It includes a series of useful sketchmaps and diagrams and a map of Moscow: details of currency, petrol coupons, car documents, visas and so on are well set out and indexed. A favourable comment is made on the roadside

posters which are described as 'not too many and not in bad taste, unlike Italy and France where the roadsides are littered with them'. Still more surprising is the statement on the superiority of toilet standards. Mr. Bell's politics are occasionally annoying—especially on Germany and Poland; but it does not prevent this travel book from being very interesting. It even gives added point to the overall impression given of Russia as one of invincible confidence in the future.

E. HEATH.

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(Continued from page ii of cover)

Looking up at a young moon 'tangled in the branches of a tall old elm', which soothed him so that he could scarcely 'bring to mind the shabby London suburb', and felt as if he were 'in a pleasant country place'. And then ahead to his dream that night of the future, of London and the River Thames clean in a clean and friendly society. So the picture goes on past our day and step by step ahead of us still, until he wrote in October, 1890, the last words of the story: 'If others can see it as I have seen it, then it may be called a vision rather than a dream'. This is what I turned to read, this is the man I consulted after Blackpool.

One of the many delegates I met there, and a keen L.M. reader, writes of the confusion before, at and following the conference: 'We shall obviously have to fight very hard indeed to keep the Labour Party anchored to its socialist principle. If the right wing win they will split the party asunder and many thousands of rank and file will pack it up. However, not to contemplate defeat, but to work for victory'. Amongst the reactions of other readers: 'What a struggle! the tug of war has to be kept up without a break. And the leadership of L.M. for example, is splendid. In re-

sponse to your appeal I'm doubling my contribution'. Birmingham Communist students 'on the occasion of the 42nd anniversary of the U.S.S.R. send £1 for the great work done by L.M.' An engineer says: 'After reading your remarks and R.P.D.'s assessments of where we are now, we feel here that L.M. is a treasure and we shall strive all we can to get new readers in Blackburn. Our small donation enclosed'. A miner sends 5s., for 'we need it more than even we did in the past'. A railway motorman encloses '10s. for the finest little magazine in the English language', and adds a further 5s. as a Christmas present. Remember the £90 which a London reader promised towards a special fund to send the Manager travelling round the country if ten others would raise the same between them? Oliver Twist writes: 'I hope by now ten Midases have turned up with £9 each so that you can collect the promised £90 and go on your travels like Prince Whats-his-name'. (No, not like the Prince, whose aim is to shore up the rotten edifice; ours is to help pull it down.) The answer is that the Out-With-The-Manager Fund has so far reached £19 19s. The November fund, though 60 per cent higher than last year's total, is much too low. Please don't slacken!

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